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SOVIET TROOP MOVEMENTS AND PREPARATIONS
IN HUNGARY DURING SPRING 1951

This report presents a short survey of Soviet troop movements in Hungary during the spring and early summer.

Units of a Soviet division withdrew months ago from Szombathely and vicinity toward the east. Several hundred armored cars were transported by train on the Szombathely-Celldomolk-Papa line. The remaining troops were drawn together in battalion strength in Szombathely at the former gendarmery and cavalry barracks. Aside from the small numbers needed to guard the water tower, which had been converted into a gasoline reservoir, no infantry remained in the city. According to all signs, the artillery of the aforementioned division is holding target practice at Hajmasker.

For weeks, transient Hungarian and Soviet troops have been passing each other at the resorts on Lake Balaton. These troops are participating in extensive practice marches, alternating with maneuvers.

Soviet antiaircraft artillery is stationed at Somlohegy to "defend" the heavy-chemicals manufacturing region of Veszprem "from attacks of the Western imperialists."

As before, one infantry and one armored unit are stationed at Gyor. There is a Soviet ammunition depot at Komaron, where a Soviet mechanized artillery unit is stationed.

At least 2,500 men left Kormend for maneuvers, but one unit and one radio station remained in the garrison, and smaller units can be seen around the city. The Soviets have established a radar station in the tower of the Catholic church.

There always used to be several Soviet mechanized artillery units in Koszeg. At present, only a very few detachments are stationed in the town. One artillery ammunition depot and one car-repair shop are in operation. Soviet officers have left the Strucc Hotel for summer maneuvers.

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Soviet infantry and mechanized artillery are present in Zalaegerszeg.

Active movement was observed from Pecs toward the south, but it would be difficult to discover any system in the constantly moving stream of trucks loaded with men and equipment. Ammunition is still being accumulated in the old Siklos fortress.

Along the Veszprem-Zircz rail line the Soviets have established several new gasoline and ammunition depots. In general, they are trying to divert attention from the fact that they are stockpiling ammunition and fuel. Every Soviet unit has more equipment than the number of men would justify.

Soviet mechanized infantry and an armored command are stationed at Szekesfehervar. It has also become known that quarters are being prepared for further Soviet troops. Similar news has arrived from the villages in the Pecs, Harkanyfurdo, and Siklos areas.

During the past few weeks much movement was observed among the units of the Soviet armored division in the Great Plains. These units have finally settled down in the Szolnok-Cegled-Kecskemet triangle, but they may soon leave again.

No important movements were observed during the past few months among the Soviet artillery units stationed in the Rumanian-Yugoslav-Hungarian border triangle.

The number of Soviet soldiers in Budapest has diminished. The former Albrecht Barracks has been returned to the Hungarian Army. Aside from the Hungarian officers' school, a Soviet engineering officers' course is also being conducted at the former Bolyai Academy. The major food depot of the occupying forces has been established in Hun Street. Some Soviet troops, estimated at no more than two battalions, are still in Lehel and Budaors streets.

Antiaircraft artillery is stationed in the Pilszcsaba camp. At the Esztergom-Kenyermezo camp are schools for armored-car and antitank personnel. Orkeny is the Soviet receiving station for war materiel. Equipment and materiel from the USSR arrives there and is tested by a Soviet-Hungarian military commission.

Soviet antiaircraft artillery is stationed on Mount Avas, near Miskolc. The Soviet armored unit at Ujdosgyor exerts a sobering influence on the depressed and embittered Hungarian workers.

At Hajmasker and Varpalota, experiments with remote-controlled tanks, various new mines, and rocket missiles are being conducted. Since the fall, the Soviets have on numerous occasions invited representatives of the several satellites to be present at these experiments. Hungarian sources have spread the horror story that the Soviets also experiment here with atomic bombs, but even the Soviets themselves derided this rumor. At the same time, the Soviets hinted at a new material of great explosive power, whose properties are not yet fully known. Hungarian spectators also claimed to know that during the past few months the Soviets had erected V-rocket catapults at Varpalota, from which they shoot toward Hajmasker.

Aside from the above-mentioned maneuvers, the all-important event was that during the past months the first Soviet turbo-jet fighters arrived in Hungary. This should not cause any anxiety, since up to now only a few companies have arrived. These planes are at the newly built Horthyliiget airport (also called Thokol airport) and at Papa's modern airport. It is estimated that altogether one Soviet air group is in Hungary.

It appears that a Soviet hydroplane base has been established at Balatonaliga. The old Alag racecourse is being converted into a new military airport, which will become part of the Hungarian capital's air defense system.

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For some time the Soviets have shown a marked interest in Hungary's railroad and public bridges. They examine all plans thoroughly and are especially interested in explosive chambers. As far as is known to date, no bridge has yet been actually mined. However, each bridge is being guarded by armed police, and spotlights are being installed on the larger bridges. Fuses have been attached to some bridges.

Work on the completion of railroads and highways and on the fortification of bridges is being intensified. Stockpiling of war materials continues, but these activities are to be viewed as preparation for a blow-up in the remote future.

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